

Trees on Maine Street

∞ *The Project Canopy Bulletin* ∞

May-June 2016



In 1976 the Arbor Day Foundation, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters, launched the Tree City USA program. Now 40 years later, this program continues to recognize communities demonstrating a commitment of caring for and managing community trees. In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Tree City USA program, we are highlighting those communities in Maine that have been part of the program since nearly the beginning.

Continue reading to see how Tree City USA helps Farmington, Westbrook, and Kennebunkport, ME, the three communities that have been recognized annually for 39 years, continue to manage and expand their urban forest.

Farmington

The town of Farmington is very proud of their association with the Arbor Day Foundation and the Tree City USA program. The citizens of Farmington have always been involved in advocating the importance of trees, not just locally, but throughout the state as a whole.

In recent years the Farmington Conservation Commission has worked to organize several large scale planting events – including work to make the downtown more green and shady with trees in curb bump-outs and planters, shade tree planting at Hippach field, local schools, and a large scale planting to stabilize the embankment on Whittier road next to the Sandy River.

Most recently, Farmington embarked on a full inventory of its street trees, parks and recreation areas, and within the University of Maine campus, with the assistance of a Project Canopy grant. As proud recipients of the Tree City USA designation for 39 years, conservation commission members feel this is a necessary step in long term planning, planning for invasive pests threats, and in setting a good stewardship example.

Kennebunkport

In celebration of Kennebunkport's many years of participation in the Tree City USA program, Project Canopy held its annual arbor day awards ceremony at the local community house. As part of that celebration, Town Arborist Bob Palmer was also recognized for his decades of service to the community, not only as arborist but as keeper of the elms, much like the namesake of the award, Frank Knight was. (Continued on page 4)

PROJECT CANOPY

assists communities and nonprofit, grassroots organizations in building self-sustaining urban and community forestry programs with strong local support.

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"But each spring a gardening instinct, sure as the sap rising in the trees, stirs within us. We look about and decide to tame another little bit of ground."
- Lewis Gantt

News and Updates

Emerald Ash Borer Eating into Municipal Budgets

When a tree dies in a city street, a private yard, or a public park, it becomes a lethal threat to people and property. City governments and property owners end up paying to safely dispose of the trunk, and the benefits that tree provided to its neighborhood are lost.

Since the early 2000s, the emerald ash borer has killed tens of millions of ash trees across 25 states. It was first identified stateside in Detroit back in 2002, but it had likely been chomping on American wood for some time by then.

The insects can't fly very far, but they managed to spread with some help from humans. When people cut down trees for firewood and take them to market somewhere else, it's easy enough to carry some pests to a new population.

The borers settle at the top of ash trees and work their way down, eventually laying eggs beneath the bark. The larvae hatch and eat their way under the bark to dine on the tree matter that circulates nutrients up the trunk. Three or four years can pass before their impact is noticeable.

"We got so used to the idea of streets being uniform, the same tree species," said Paul DeLong, State Forester of Wisconsin and President of NASF. "There's a recognition now to say that's maybe not a wise strategy if one's trying to limit the damage that could be done by the introduction of an invasive species."

If the emerald ash borer shows up and kills off all the local ash trees at around the same time, that puts a huge stress on the city to cut down the trunks all at once, before they fall and kill someone or damage property. To avoid that burden on the budget and human resources, cities have begun cutting down trees before they get infected.

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Long-term, the outlook is bleak for the ash. Cities will have to get used to a world without them, or dedicate annual funding to keep their meds up to date.

- See more at: <http://www.stateforesters.org/news-events/blog/emerald-ash-borer-eating-municipal-budgets#sthash.Yg4x4hwF.rFnIyp0D.dpuf>



Think you've got a big tree? Sign up to claim bragging rights.

That big tree on your property that you're mighty proud of might be a champ. Consider nominating it for York County's Big Tree Registry sponsored by York County Soil and Water Conservation District and Maine Forest Service.

The contest is a local version of the state Big Tree Contest, last published in 2010 [Maine Register of Big Trees](#)

The contest showcases all the things that trees provide - shade, habitat, beauty, carbon storage, storm water filtration, said District Manager Melissa Brandt. "You get bragging rights and it's kind of fun," said Brandt. "It's a way to celebrate the whole of what trees are."

Any native tree is eligible, although the district is especially interested in promoting ash, maple and hemlock trees, the three species believed most at risk of invasive insects - the Emerald Ash Borer, Asian long-horned beetle and the hemlock wooly adelgid.

Nominations will be verified by District Forester Oliver Markewicz, who will make arrangements to measure the tree's circumference, height and crown spread, and then calculate an overall value.

Applications are available [here](#). They are also available by calling the district office 324-0888 x 214

Nominations will be accepted until Dec. 15. Winners for each species will receive a copy of Forest Trees of Maine.

Brandt said tree hosts have no obligation to show the tree to the public or to have the location of the tree published on a map.

- <http://www.forestworksme.org/blog>

*"Now is the time of the illuminated woods ... when every leaf glows like a tiny lamp."
- J. Burroughs*

MFS seeking reports of defoliation by Bruce spanworm

The Maine Forest Service (MFS) is looking for outbreak populations of Bruce spanworm, *Operophtera bruceata*. Bruce spanworm are small green inchworms that feed on maple, beech and oak in particular and most often are found in large numbers in the northern half of Maine. Defoliation occurs not long after bud break; in the past it has been the last two weeks of May.

Finding populations and collecting larvae from them is very challenging because the larvae pupate within a few days after you first notice defoliation. If you notice anything like this, please let MFS know immediately.

MFS is looking for Bruce spanworm because it is very closely related to winter moth, which is killing trees in southern new England and is expanding and intensifying in Maine's southern and midcoast regions. MFS is working with US Forest Service and UMass, investigating mortality factors - attempting to understand why Bruce spanworm very rarely has outbreaks (and when they occur, the outbreaks are very short-lived), as opposed to winter moth, which has been in permanent outbreak phase in New England for more than a decade.

If you find what you think is a Bruce spanworm outbreak contact: Charlene Donahue at charlene.donahue@maine.gov or (207) 287-3244



*"May and June. Soft syllables, gentle names for the two best months in the garden year: cool, misty mornings gently burned away with a warming spring sun, followed by breezy afternoons and chilly nights. The discussion of philosophy is over; it's time for work to begin."
- Peter Loewer*

Did you know you can always find the Forest & Shade Tree - Insect & Disease Conditions for Maine online? Visit http://maine.gov/dacf/mfs/publications/condition_reports.html

City Parks, Clean Water: Making Great Places Using Green Infrastructure

Super-slides and wave pools? Try bioswales and rain gardens. Across the country, city parks are doing double-duty to help control stormwater—and infrastructure's rarely looked so good.

When rain falls on an urban area, it meets cold, hard concrete. Instead of soaking into the earth to recharge groundwater—the subsurface supply that supports our trees and crops—it runs rapidly across paved surfaces into sewer systems and waterways, picking up pollutants along the way. The result: overwhelmed sewage treatment facilities, contaminated and eroded streams, and even flash flooding.

Especially in cities expecting more severe weather as the climate changes, these are good reasons to get stormwater under control. Savvy planners are putting parks to work as green infrastructure that helps manage the runoff: it's often more cost-effective than more traditional options like pipework or culverts. Depending on the resources available, parks can be designed to filter and absorb excess water, store it, or just slow it down. And unlike traditional "gray infrastructure," parks offer a host of other benefits to the community. (Ever go for a picnic or a morning jog at a wastewater plant? Yeah, us neither.)

Done right, this new breed of "water park" can be just as fun as those chlorine-filled wave pools.

Want to learn more? The Trust for Public Land's latest report, "City Parks, Clean Water" has the full story on all these examples, plus the nuts and bolts (and grass and leaves) of green infrastructure—from the pros and cons of permeable pavement to which city park system has the highest water bill. Download the report [here](http://www.tpl.org/blog/nation%E2%80%99s-best-water-parks-are-not-what-you-think).

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"Science has never drummed up quite as effective a tranquilizing agent as a sunny spring day."
- W. Earl Hall

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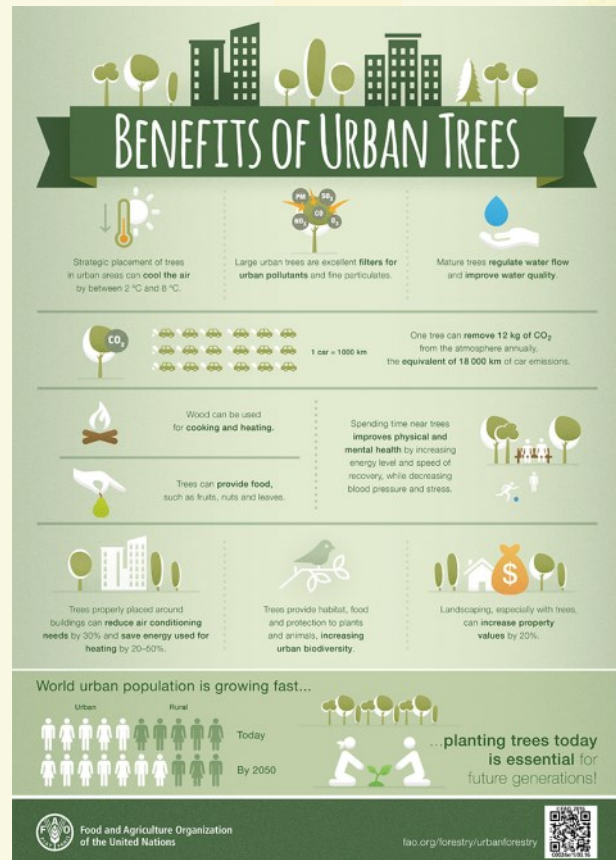
A Project Canopy grant also helped the community to update and bring the town tree inventory into ArcGIS online as a mobile application. The information is very helpful to the tree warden and town arborist. The tree warden gets regular calls regarding trees in town; she is now able to field review shade tree information on a mobile device and determine maintenance requirements based on species, condition, size, and history. The town arborist is continually observing, noting changes, damage, and infections; he can now update the tree inventory data in the field from his tablet or smartphone using the mobile application. This application creates a much more dynamic system for tree management and planning as compared to the old inventory on a single computer in the town office, which rarely was updated and quickly went out of date.

The town maintains over 1,200 tagged trees, those included in the inventory, many of which are large American elms. The Shade Tree Committee oversees the replacement of worn or dislodged tags, to ensure they are accurate in the new geographically referenced inventory.

Westbrook

While all three communities have actively participated in the Tree City USA program for the last 39 years, Westbrook's program is often regarded as the one to spur all subsequent programs on. For many years, most of the local tree ordinances, a requirement of the Tree City Program, were modelled on the original 1972 ordinance developed in Westbrook. Longtime arborist Wes McKague was recognized for his outstanding service to community and stewardship of city trees. The Maine Arborist Association awards are named in his honor.

While the times have certainly changed, Westbrook continues to be recognized for its progressive street tree program. The city maintains a full inventory, and counting. Recent projects have significantly improved major thoroughfares in town, including the William L. Clarke drive bypass. This area was slated for improvements by MDOT, and working collaboratively with the city, they planted dozens of new trees, improved lighting, and sidewalks. The area is now a pleasure not only to drive through, but also to walk or bicycle. It serves as a great example of the calming effect of trees and their ability to slow drivers.



- <http://www.fao.org/forestry/urbanforestry/en/>

May

14 NEC-ISA Tree Climbing Championship - Deering Oaks Park, Portland
16-22 Maine Arbor Week
17 Arbor Day Celebration, Orono. jan.santerre@maine.gov
18 Forestry for Maine Birds, SWOAM woodlot, Standish
kevin.doran@maine.gov or 207-287-4988.
18 Arbor Day Celebration and Movie night, Evergreen Wilde Chapel, Portland friendsofforestcitytrees.blogspot.com/
22-28 [Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week!](#)

"In June as many as a dozen species may burst their buds on a single day. No man can heed all of these anniversaries; no man can ignore all of them."
- Aldo Leopold

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

Maine Forest Service

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